Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-5. (Cancelled).

6. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a cDNA sequence that encodes a polypeptide, wherein the polypeptide contains an amino acid sequence which has at least 70% identical to SEQ ID NO: 9 and has activity of increasing the sensitivity of a plant to an environmental factor.

7. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid that, under a high stringency condition, hybridizes to a probe containing the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 20; or the complement thereof, wherein the nucleic acid encodes a polypeptide that has activity of increasing the sensitivity of a plant to an environmental factor.

8. (Previously Presented) A vector comprising the isolated nucleic acid of claim 6.

9. (Previously Presented) A vector comprising the isolated nucleic acid of claim 7.

10. (Previously Presented) A host cell comprising the isolated nucleic acid of claim 6.

11. (Previously Presented) A host cell comprising the isolated nucleic acid of claim 7.

12. (Original) The host cell of claim 10, wherein the host cell is an E. coli, a yeast, an insect, a plant, or a mammalian cell.

13. (Original) The host cell of claim 11, wherein the host cell is an E. coli, a yeast, an insect, a plant, or a mammalian cell.

14. (Original) A method of producing a polypeptide, the method comprising

culturing the host cell of claim 10 in a medium under conditions permitting expression of the polypeptide, and

isolating the polypeptide.

15. (Original) A method of producing a polypeptide, the method comprising

culturing the host cell of claim 11 in a medium under conditions permitting expression of the polypeptide, and

isolating the polypeptide.

16. (Withdrawn) A transformed plant cell that lacks a polypeptide containing a sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein, compared with the wild type cell, the transformed plant cell has a higher tolerance to salt, chilling, pathogens, oxidative stress, or water-deficit due to absence of expression of the polypeptide.

17. (Withdrawn) The plant cell of claim 16, wherein the cell is an Arabidopsis cell.

18-19. (Cancelled).

20. (Withdrawn) A method of producing a transformed plant cell, the method comprising introducing into a plant cell a nucleic acid that decreases the expression of a gene encoding a polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein, compared with the wild type cell, the transformed plant cell has a higher tolerance to salt, chilling, pathogens, oxidative stress, or water-deficit due to absence of the polypeptide.

21. (Cancelled).

22. (Previously Presented) A transformed plant cell comprising a recombinant nucleic acid that encodes the heterologous polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 9.

23. (Previously Presented) A transgenic plant comprising a recombinant nucleic acid that encodes the heterologous polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 9.

24. (Previously Presented) A method of producing a transformed plant cell, the method comprising:

introducing into a plant cell a recombinant nucleic acid encoding the heterologous polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 9, and

expressing the polypeptide in the cell.

25. (Previously Presented) A method of producing a transgenic plant, the method comprising:

introducing into a plant cell a recombinant nucleic acid encoding the heterologous polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 9,

expressing the polypeptide in the cell, and

cultivating the cell to regenerate a plant.

26. (Previously Presented) A transformed plant cell comprising a heterologous sequence containing the recombinant nucleic acid of claim 6.

27. (Previously Presented) A transgenic plant comprising a heterologous sequence containing the recombinant nucleic acid of claim 7.

28. (Previously Presented) A method of producing a transformed plant cell, the method comprising:

introducing into a plant cell a heterologous sequence containing the nucleic acid of claim 6, and

expressing the polypeptide in the cell.

29. (Previously Presented) A method of producing a transgenic plant, the method comprising:

introducing into a plant cell a heterologous sequence containing the nucleic acid of claim 7, and

cultivating the cell to regenerate a plant.

30. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid of claim 6, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 80% identical to SEQ ID NO: 9.

31. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid of claim 30, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 90% identical to SEQ ID NO: 9.

32. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid of claim 31, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 9.

33. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid of claim 32, wherein the amino acid sequence is SEQ ID NO: 9.